Secrecy of confession must never be violated, Vatican says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In the light of “a worrying negative prejudice” against the Catholic Church, Pope Francis ordered the publication of a document affirming the absolute secrecy of everything said in confession and calling on priests to defend it at all costs, even at the cost of their lives.

The need for the absolute secrecy of confession “comes directly from the revealed divine law and has its roots in the very nature of the sacrament to the point that no exception whatsoever can be admitted in the ecclesial sphere and even less in the civil one,” a new Vatican document said.

The “note of the Apostolic Penitentiary on the importance of the internal forum and the inviolability of the sacramental seal,” according to the Vatican document, was approved by Pope Francis on June 21 and published by the Vatican on July 1.

The note was signed by Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, head of the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican court dealing with matters of conscience.

Some recent challenges to the secret of confession have come from states trying to react to the Catholic Church’s clerical sexual abuse crisis, the note acknowledged. The document did not mention any specific proposed legislation, such as that working its way through the California legislature or proposed in Australia in response to a government inquiry into the sex abuse crisis.

“The priest, in fact, comes to know of the sins of the penitent ‘non ut homo sed ut Deus’—not as a man, but as God—to the point that he simply ‘does not know’ what was said in the confessional because he did not listen as a man, but precisely in the name of God,” the Vatican document said.

“A confessor’s defense of the sacramental seal, if necessary, even to the point that no exception whatsoever in the very nature of the sacrament to the point that no exception whatsoever can be admitted in the ecclesial sphere and even less in the civil one,” a new Vatican document said.

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Archbishop Sheen's remains moved to Peoria; sainthood cause is reopened

PEORIA, Ill. (CNS)—As a small group of witnesses silently looked on, the mortal remains of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen were interred at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Peoria late in the afternoon of June 27, completing a transfer from St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City to the Peoria cathedral.

Earlier in the day, Bishop Jenky announced that the sainthood cause for Archbishop Sheen’s remains and the effort the Diocese of Peoria has since cooperated with the Diocese of New York court system for the transfer in 2016. However, after the diocesan final appeal on June 7, the archdiocese has since cooperated with the Diocese of New York to ensure the transfer followed both civil and Church law.

While the events surrounding the return of his remains and the effort the Diocese of Peoria officials are hopeful that Pope Francis will soon receive evidence of an alleged miracle attributed to Archbishop Sheen's priestly ordination. The new Vatican document also specified that when a penitent confesses to a sin that is a crime, “Any political action of legislative initiative aimed at breaking the inviolability of the sacramental seal,” it said, would be an unacceptable offense against the liberty of the Church, which does not receive its legitimacy from individual states, but from God.

The return of the mortal remains of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, sprinkles holy water on the new tomb bearing the remains of his uncle at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Peoria in June 27. Archbishop Sheen’s remains were transferred from St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City to the Peoria cathedral. (CNS photo/Jennifer williams, The Catholic Post)
Pope Francis gives relics of St. Peter to Orthodox patriarch

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In what Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople described as a “brave and bold” gesture, Pope Francis gave the patriarch a famous relicary containing bone fragments believed to belong to St. Peter.

The only time the bronze relicary has been displayed publicly was in November 2013, when Pope Francis had it present for public veneration at the closing Mass for the Year of Faith, opened by Pope Benedict XVI.

The bronze case contains nine of the bone fragments discovered during excavations of the necropolis under St. Peter’s Basilica that began in the 1400s. In the 1960s, archaeologist Margherita Guarducci published a paper asserting that she had found St. Peter’s bones near the site identified as his tomb.

While no pope has ever declared the bones to be authentic, St. Paul VI announced in 1968 that the “relics” of St. Peter had been “identified in a way which we can hold to be convincing.”

Pope Paul took nine of the bone fragments, commissioned the bronze relicary, and kept the relic in his private chapel in the papal apartments.

Pope Francis removed them from the chapel on June 29, the feast of saints Peter and Paul.

Patriarch Bartholomew had sent a delegation led by Archbishop Job of Telmessos to the Vatican for the feast day celebrations. After the solemn Mass, Pope Francis and Archbishop Job went down to St. Peter’s tomb under the high altar to pray.

Then, the archbishop recounted, Pope Francis asked him to wait for him because he had a gift for his “brother” Patriarch Bartholomew. The pope came back and led the archbishop to his little blue Ford Focus and they were driven to the Apostolic Palace.

They entered the chapel of the old papal apartment, where Pope Francis chose not to live, and “the pope took the reliquary that his predecessor Paul VI had placed in the little chapel and offered it to his guest,” according to Vatican News.

“For us, this was an extraordinary and unexpected event that we could not have hoped for,” Vatican News quoted the archbishop as saying.

He phoned Patriarch Bartholomew as soon as he could to tell him the news.

Arrangements quickly were made for Mgr. Andrea Palmieri, undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, to accompany the relics to the Panath, the Orthodox patriarchate’s headquarters in Istanbul.

It was “another gigantic step toward concrete unity,” Archbishop Job said.

At a ceremony on June 30 to receive the relics and venerate them, Patriarch Bartholomew said, “Pope Francis made this grand, fraternal and historic gesture of giving the Orthodox fragments of the relics of St. Peter.

“I was deeply moved,” the patriarch said, according to the news published on the patriarchate’s Facebook page along with 15 photos. “It was a brave and bold initiative of Pope Francis.”

Holy Father to celebrate Mass with migrants, refugees on July 8

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis will celebrate Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica with migrants, refugees and volunteer rescue teams, the Vatican said.

According to the Vatican, the Mass on July 8 will mark the sixth anniversary of the pope’s visit to the southern Italian island of Lampedusa.

“Around 250 people will participate in the celebration, which will take place at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter’s Basilica, the Vatican said on July 1. While the Mass will be broadcasted live, it will not be open to the press or the public.

“The Holy Father desires that the moment be as recollected as possible in the remembrance of how many have lost their lives fleeing war and misery, and so as to encourage those who strive day after day to sustain, accompany and welcome migrants and refugees,” the Vatican said.

In 2013, the pope decided to visit Lampedusa, a small island with a population of 6,000 and just 70 miles from Tunisia, after seeing newspaper headlines describing the drowning of immigrants at sea.

While celebrating Mass there, Pope Francis said the purpose of his visit was not only to pray for those who lost their lives at sea, but also “to try to awaken people’s consciences.”

“Maybe we think, ‘Oh, poor soul,’ but we continue on our way,” he said. “The culture of well-being, which leads us to think only of ourselves, makes us insensitive to the cries of others.”

The island was recently back in the headlines after the captain of a migrant rescue ship made her way into the port of Lampedusa after Italian authorities blocked the ship’s entry.

The ship—with 40 migrants on board—had been forced to remain in the midst of a heatwave.

Upon her arrival at the port, Carola Rackete, the captain, was arrested on June 29 by Italian authorities and could face three years to 10 years in prison.

While Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini applauded her arrest, several European countries denounced her detention, stating that as a ship captain, Rackete fulfilled her duty by rescuing the migrants.

Pope Francis has often praised the work of rescue volunteers who risk their lives to save others.

During a 2018 Mass commemorating the fifth anniversary of his visit to Lampedusa, the pope expressed his gratitude to a Spanish rescue team stationed in the Mediterranean Sea “for embodying in our day the parable of the good Samaritan, who stopped to save the life of the poor man beaten by bandits.”

Faith Alive! takes vacation

The weekly Faith Alive! religious education feature, produced by Catholic News Service, takes its annual break from now until Sept. 6.

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President Trump, Kim Jong Un and a ‘culture of encounter’

While there has been mixed reaction to President Donald J. Trump becoming the first U.S. president to visit North Korea, one prominent voice made sure to applaud the action. Pope Francis called the June 30 meeting between the president and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un a “good example of a culture of encounter.” (CNS photo/Kevin Lamarque, Reuters)

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Paz con justicia es nuestra esperanza para el Día de la Independencia

“[Jesús] nos dejó un mensaje de paz y no de la guerra. #2242”

La paz es lo que permite que las sociedades se fortalezcan, pero el prerequisito para la paz genuina es la justicia: el ordenamiento justo de todas las cuestiones humanas para garantizar la equidad, la imparcialidad y la igualdad entre las personas y los grupos. Sin la paz se ven gravemente amenazados nuestros esfuerzos de cultivar y crecer como personas, familias y comunidades.

Tal como señalé el año pasado en mi carta pastoral titulada Somos uno con Jesucristo: Carta pastoral sobre los fundamentos de la antropología cristiana, en nuestra búsqueda de la paz, los cristianos estamos llamados a construir puentes, no muros. Ya sea en la política, en las relaciones raciales, en la crisis económica, en las disputas familiares o de comunidades locales, tenemos el desafío de ser pacíficos, de poner los intereses de los demás antes nuestros y participar en un diálogo respetuoso.

También indiqué que nuestra Iglesia extiende a todos el amor incondicional de Jesús. Recibimos a los extranjeros y nos esforzamos por lograr que todos se sientan como en casa. Apoyamos los esfuerzos de nuestro país para resguardar las fronteras y para reglamentar los procesos que rigen el proceso de inmigración y de reubicación de los refugiados.

Sin embargo, insistimos en que se protejan los derechos de las personas y las familias en todas las circunstancias, y anteponemos la defensa de la dignidad humana a la conveniencia política o práctica. Tomamos tan en serio esta responsabilidad que las enseñanzas de la Iglesia señalan que los ciudadanos tienen la obligación de atender a su conciencia y no obedecer las leyes y las normativas que sean contrarias a los derechos fundamentales de las personas o a las enseñanzas del Evangelio (véase Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica, #2242). Esta es la paz con justicia: la convicción absoluta de que el respeto a los derechos y a la dignidad humanos son esenciales para el ordenamiento justo de la sociedad y la preservación de los principios y valores que más apreciamos como nación.

En mi carta pastoral también hablé sobre lo que llamé los “crímenes del tanto y el como”. Por ejemplo, respetamos tanto el derecho de los países soberanos a controlar sus fronteras como el derecho de las personas y las familias a emigrar y ser tratadas con dignidad y respeto. Reconocemos tanto el derecho constitucional de los ciudadanos estadounidenses de portar armas como la responsabilidad de los gobiernos de regular la venta y el uso de armas de fuego por razones de seguridad pública. Celebramos tanto la diversidad de idiomas, culturas y razas en nuestro país como la importancia de que todos estemos unidos y en paz. Amamos a los pobres y apoyamos el esfuerzo de todos los que tienen hambre, un techo que lo cobijen, tenga hambre y esté privado de una atención médica de calidad.

Encontramos esta visión para el en las Bienaventuranzas (Mt 5:1-12) en las que los valores contrarios a la cultura, tales como pobreza, dolor, mansedumbre y persecución están fundamentalmente alineados con la misericordia, la pureza de corazón, el fomento de la paz, y el hambre y la sed de justicia. La paz con justicia deviene cuando anteponemos la dignidad humana a los valores utilitarios de política, economía o ingeniería social. La verdad que se encuentra allí donde la justicia y la caridad prevalecen en defensa de los derechos humanos y la justicia.

Continuemos este fin de semana festivo tanto con un sentido de gratitud hacia todos los que han dado tanto para preservar nuestra libertad como estadounidenses, como con nuestro compromiso de buscar la paz con justicia en nuestras vidas personales y en el terreno político.
July 9

July 10
Kings of Columbus Mater Dei Council 3777, St. Michael’s, 1305 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis. Theology on Tap, sponsored by the archdiocesan Young Adult and College Parish, Campus Ministry, doors open 6:15 p.m., 7 p.m. presentation followed by social time, all faithful welcome, free admission and parking, food and drink available for purchase. Information: indycatholic.org, 317-232-1387.

Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

July 11
Holy Spirit Parish, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis. Parish Festival Thurs. 6-11 p.m. Fri. 6-11 p.m. Sat. 1 p.m.-midnight, food, beer garden, bingo, carnival rides, entertainment, Texas poker, black jack, $10 admission per adult refunded in food and drink vouchers, children younger than 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Information: 317-353-9404.

July 12
St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3354 W. 59th St., Indianapolis. Mid-Summer’s Eve Party, 6:30-10 p.m., food, live music, coffee, latte, children’s activities, art with music, art, poetry, jewelry, story-telling and crafts. $5 fee to display or perform at art show, free admission. Information: 317-926-7559.

July 12-13

July 13
St. Maria Goretti Parish, 17102 Spring Mill Road, Westfield (Lafayette Diocese). Italian Festival, 4-30 p.m. Mass, 5:30 p.m., food, live music, games, inflatables, 9-45 p.m. fireworks. Information and food and raffle tickets, visit www.usmeonline.org.

July 14
Harrison County Fairgrounds, 341 S. Capital Ave., Corydon. St. Joseph Tri-Parish Picnic, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., chicken and ham dinners with homemade noodles, dressing and pie, $11 adults, $5 children, Kubota and big money raffle, quilts, bingo, big money raffle, Aug. 21-22.

July 15

July 17
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat, 17102 Spring Mill Road, Westfield (Lafayette Diocese), 6:30-9 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, 7-8 p.m., all are welcome. Information: garytaylor@chicagocatholic.org. (Submitted photo)

July 17-18
St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mckee Ave., Indianapolis. Third Thursday Adoration, interceding for women experiencing infertility, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:30 p.m.

July 19
Hickory Hall Polo Club, 7511 E. 105th St., Indianapolis (in the Lafayette Diocese). Polo at Sunset, proceeds benefiting Knights of Columbus Veterans Services and USO of Indiana, 5 p.m.-gates open, 6 p.m. matches, wine pull, silent and live auction, food, candy shop, $20 per car admission. Information:indypolo.com.

July 20

August 1
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5535 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Day of Silence, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $35 per day, includes breakfast and lunch, room to use throughout the day, access to common areas and grounds. Depending on availability, overnight stays additional $25, $9 cold plate dinner when available. Information and registration: Kristine Meyer, 317-545-7681, kmeyer@archindy.org, www.archindy.org/fatima.

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All Saints Parish to host exhibit on rosary mysteries during parish festivals

“Is your life miserable because of your lack of balance?” asks Father Emmerich. “Are you overwhelmed, confused, stressed, exhausted? Do you wake up every morning feeling like you are the only one holding your family together?”

The nine days of prayer and Masses will culminate on July 16, the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. “People ask me, ‘What about someone else’s behavior?’ I say, ‘If you feel like you are the only one holding your family together?’”

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events/submit, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Cindy Clark, or by fax at 317-236-1063.
Bishop helps migrant family at border cross into U.S. on asylum trek

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, was able on June 27 to help a migrant family seeking asylum successfully cross an international bridge from Mexico into the United States. Under current policy, migrants seeking asylum must stay on the other side of the border while their claims are heard, a provision of the “Remain in Mexico” program instituted by the Trump administration this year.

“There are supposed to be exceptions that are not being respected,” said Bishop Seitz, who spoke with immigration officials about allowing the family to enter. One of the migrants the border bishop accompanied has a cognitive disability and another suffers from a heart problem, news agency Reuters reported on June 27. It’s unclear how many people were able to enter. For the moment, the family is being held at a facility on the U.S. side of the border while their claim is processed, said a video released by the Diocese of El Paso after the event.

“We, their lawyers, nobody is able to contact them, we’re going to be out of communication,” Corbett said in the video. “So, it’s fingers crossed. They’re in Texas. They’re in the United States. They’re at least safe tonight. We hope that continues.”

Along with other U.S. prelates, Bishop Seitz has argued that the policy forcing asylum-seekers and others to stay in the Mexican border towns while waiting for their cases to be processed exposes them to danger. Before crossing the bridge, the bishop spoke with a group of people who had not been able to enter. The video shows a man who introduces himself to Bishop Seitz from among the crowd and tells him he is Cuban and was in detention for a month—in Mexico—and not allowed to shower.

“Pray for us,” the man asked him after showing the bishop a black eye and telling him that he was robbed and beaten after being released in Mexico. The bishop then gave him a blessing.

“The video later shows a relieved Bishop Seitz after the family he accompanied was allowed into the U.S. ‘Right now, I’m just so very grateful to God,’ he said. ‘These days, when so many things can seem to work against those who are seeking refuge in our country, today something went well. Today, somebody listened, and they were able to pass through. They will be able to go through their asylum process here in the United States with loved ones in safety and security. We’re so grateful for that.’

Earlier in the day, he had called attention to anti-immigrant attitudes in the United States and the dangers that have resulted and the loss of lives, particularly of children along the border. Bishop Seitz walked the bridge and also prayed with migrants and other Catholics on the other side of the border.

‘These people we accompanied today have suffered more than any of us can imagine in their short lifetimes, and now they can experience at least a moment of peace,’ he said.

‘Migrants are persons like us’: Border bishops offer prayers after deaths

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholic bishops from both sides of the border near McAllen, Texas, issued a joint statement expressing condolences to the families of migrant children and parents who recently drowned trying to cross the river into the United States.

Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, and Bishop Eugenio Lira Rugarcia, of the neighboring Diocese of Matamoros, Mexico, issued the statement in English and Spanish on June 28, saying their respective border dioceses “express with much pain the sorrow of the whole community upon hearing of the parents and children that have recently lost their lives upon crossing the Rio Grande River, seeking a better life.”

They mentioned, in particular, the deaths of 25-year-old Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez and his 23-month-old daughter Angie Valeria, Salvadorans whose bodies were photographed after they drowned in the river that flows across Texas and Mexico and forms part of the U.S.-Mexico border.

“We offer our condolences to the families and loved ones of those who have died, and we recall that over the course of years countless persons have lost their lives in a similar manner, many whose names are known to God alone,” the statement said.

The statements also mentioned the recent deaths of a mother in her 20s and her three children, whose bodies were found by authorities on federal land near the U.S. side of the river close to McAllen on June 28. They have not been identified.

The border community of Brownsville, where Bishop Flores serves, held a vigil late Sunday to remember the deaths of the Salvadoran father and daughter, whose bodies were reburied at El Salvador for burial the weekend of June 27-28.

“The United States is a country that suffers these sorrows, with whom we have been able personally to speak and pray, we ask God the Father for the eternal rest of their deceased loved ones, and we ask that he fill loved ones who remain with strength and hope in these difficult moments,” the bishops said in their statement.

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To make it through 19 years, Esperanza Threads has had to carefully attend to changing needs of the communities in need of employment. At its start, it helped women transition from prison. Later, it worked on refugees from around the world being resettled by the diocesan Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services. As the number of refugees and immigrants has declined since 2017 because of revised immigration policies, Sister Mary Eileen has strengthened connections with Cleveland neighborhood groups and nonprofit organizations that can touch with city residents in need of jobs.

Emily Tiell, job developer with Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services, chairs Esperanza Threads’ board of directors. She said the program has remained flexible over the years to meet changing needs.

“I get to see the end result. I get to see somebody who doesn’t have a skill at all learn a skill and become someone who, in the job I like being able to see people helping and supporting themselves and their family,” Tiell said.

The program works with a $180,000 annual budget. It has been supported by foundations, religious congregations and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the U.S. bishops’ domestic anti-poverty program. The goal is to become self-sufficient, and that’s why there’s a stronger effort to market the clothing and accessory lines, Sister Mary Eileen said.

Esperanza Threads is based in a building on the grounds of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in the Clinton Square Arts District in Cleveland’s Detroit-Shoreway neighborhood, home to people of mixed economic backgrounds.

“Over the years, we have created a curriculum that we feel really is responding to what the sewing manufacturers are looking for in order to hire. We have tried really hard to get those skills down so that they know what they’re doing,” Sister Mary Eileen said.

She credited the volunteer instructors for adapting the classes to developments in skills in the limited time classes meet.

National Safety Apparel of Cleveland, with about 1,000 employees, readily hires people who have successfully completed the training. Sal Geraci, the company’s chief operating officer, credited Sister Mary Eileen for ensuring students’ skills match industry needs.

“They come to us with a good set of skills that are ingrained and taught with their time with Esperanza,” he told Catholic News Service (CNS). “Sister doesn’t suggest candidates unless she feels they can meet the day-to-day rigors of production that we have here.”

About 40 people complete training annually. In 2018, about 70 percent of graduates landed jobs in the sewing industry, and another 15 percent settled into other employment, Sister Mary Eileen said.

“We don’t just teach sewing here,” Sister Mary Eileen told CNS. “We run this like it’s a business, so that they understand you have to show up on time. We have them clock in… They clock in and clock out even for the breaks so they’re getting into the habit.

“They can’t be talking on the phones except during the breaks. And they have to really apply themselves because in the sewing industry they put benchmarks of how fast you work making something and in order to stay on [the job] they have to meet those benchmarks.”

Esperanza Threads has taken to marketing its apparel line more widely, focusing on parishes and churches whose members might prefer locally made clothing that is responsibly sourced.

“We’re appealing to religious organizations, Catholic and other denominations, who want shirts made but who understood that by supporting a group like ours, even though the shirts are more expensive than those that are made in China, that this is giving work here where people are receiving a fair wage,” Sister Mary Eileen said.

The next class is expected to start in mid-July. Sister Mary Eileen, Tiell and Haynes are identifying trainees who have the right attitude and interest in developing a sewing career.

“There are sewing jobs to be had,” Haynes said. “We just need somebody to train.”

Employee Omerti Eblia, an immigrant from Baraka, Congo, sews a T-shirt at Esperanza Threads in Cleveland on June 25. (CNS photo/Chaz Muth)

Employee Omerti Eblia, an immigrant from Baraka, Congo, sews a T-shirt at Esperanza Threads in Cleveland on June 25. (CNS photo/Chaz Muth)

We’re navigating through some very challenging times for our Church and for our society.

Responsibility and reconciliation. Comment by Archbishop Thompson and Fleming

“First and foremost, it is my responsibility as archbishop and leader of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to lead this diocese in maintaining the Catholic identity throughout the archdiocese, of any entity. We engaged in a rather long relationship trying to accompany the schools toward reconciliation with these principles— especially this public witness of shared language around our roles and responsibilities of ministers of the faith as vital ministers in Church ministry. And the other was making, as I always try to say, to really apply themselves because in the rigors of production that we have here.

“Two years ago, we began a conversation with all five of our private Catholic schools. The two that were struggling continued conversation with us.”

“It was through much prayerful discernment over the course of that two years, and really, much conversation on what it truly means to be ministers of the faith and how we would uphold that in our Catholic schools, that led to the schools to make their own decisions as to whether they would wish to retain that Catholic identity.”

Help for students with same-sex attraction. Comment by Gina Fleming

“We have that we have students in our two schools today who are struggling with their sexual identity, who are experiencing questions around their own sexual identity. We are doing research, we are holding conferences for teachers and school leaders to ensure that they understand what it means to walk beside these young people and to be there for them.”

Employee Omerti Eblia, an immigrant from Baraka, Congo, sews a T-shirt at Esperanza Threads in Cleveland on June 25. (CNS photo/Chaz Muth)

Employee Omerti Eblia, an immigrant from Baraka, Congo, sews a T-shirt at Esperanza Threads in Cleveland on June 25. (CNS photo/Chaz Muth)
Supreme Court stops citizenship question in census, for now

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. bishops, in a July 27 statement, praised the Supreme Court’s decision on June 27 to block the Trump administration’s added citizenship question to the 2020 census, and said “the inclusion of a citizenship question must ensure genuine reasons” for it.

The 5-4 ruling—written by Chief Justice John Roberts and joined in part by the other justices, said the Trump administration’s reason for adding the citizenship question “seems to have been concocted.”

The day the decision was announced, President Donald J. Trump tweeted that he was asking his lawyers if they can “delay the census, no matter how long” until the Supreme Court has made a decision on the question. The government still has the chance to offer a “legal” reason for the added question, but it is a race against time because the process of starting to print the 600 million documents for next year’s count was scheduled to start on July 1.

Trump told reporters on July 1 at the White House: “It’s very important to find out if somebody is a citizen as opposed to an illegal.”

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) statement on the high court’s decision said: “All persons in the United States should be counted in the census regardless of their immigration status.” It also reiterated its previous statement on the issue by stressing that “questions regarding citizenship should not be included in the census.”

“We hope that this view will prevail, whether by administrative action or judicial determination,” said the statement, authored by Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., chairman of the USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the Committee on Migration.

The census case hit a potential twist in late May, a month after oral arguments, when newly submitted evidence from the files of a deceased Republican strategist put the citizenship question in a very light: as a means to create an advantage for whites and Republicans in future elections. Then in late June, a federal appeals court in Maryland allowed a lower court to study the background of these files.

The government had asked the Supreme Court to rule on the census dispute by the end of June, so that it can finalize the census questionnaire and get the forms printed in time for enumeration next year.

During oral arguments about the added census question in April, Justice Sonia Sotomayor said: “There’s no doubt people will respond less” to the census questionnaire with a citizenship question, a point which she said “has been proven in study after study.”

Justices Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh said citizenship questions were common in other countries and had been on the U.S. forms over the years.

Both Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito said the information it would provide would help enforce the Voting Rights Act. When asked about the question leading to potentially less participation, he said: “There is always going to be a trade-off.”

Lawyers for New York, immigrant advocacy groups and the House of Representatives stressed that the question would prevent noncitizens from filling out the census and have a negative financial and political impact on communities with large immigrant populations.

A similar argument was raised in a friend-of-the-court brief opposed to the citizenship question filed by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York and Catholic Charities of Brooklyn and Queens in New York. The brief stressed that the added question would cause a “net differential undercount of people who live in noncitizen and Hispanic households,” and would result in a “drastic and unwarranted reduction in funding in states and cities with large populations of such persons” and also would impact social service agencies.

In a USCCB statement issued on the day of oral arguments for the census case, Bishops Dewane and Vasquez stressed the importance of an accurate census count.

“The Catholic Church and other service providers rely on the national census to provide an accurate count in order to effectively serve those in need,” said Bishop Dewane.

Bishop Vasquez said all people should be counted in the census, regardless of their citizenship, and he said “proposed questions regarding immigration status will obstruct accurate census estimates and ultimately harm immigrant families and the communities they live in.”

By one government estimate, about 6.5 million people might decide not to participate in the census with the added citizenship question. The census is rooted in the text of the Constitution, which requires an “actual enumeration” of the population every 10 years. It determines federal funding for roads and schools, congressional districting and number of congressional representatives.

Program works to heal Iraqi Christians suffering in mind and soul

BEIRUT (CNS)—After enduring persecution, violence and uprooting, a group of Iraqi clergy religious and laypeople are on the path to healing.

“They are suffering, in their minds and in their souls,” said Melkite Father Gabriel Hachem, part of a team from Lebanon that conducted trauma healing sessions in Irbil, Iraq.

The world “cannot remain indifferent. We cannot stand by and do nothing,” Father Hachem told Catholic News Service (CNS).

There is a “need to verbalize, to share about their experiences. ‘They need to speak, to be supported, to be heard,’ he emphasized.

Eighteen people—a mix of priests, nuns and laypeople—participated in the mid-June program. Participants were Chaldean and Syriac Catholic, Syriac and Armenian Orthodox as well as evangelical.

The Lebanese team providing the Middle East Council of Churches’ program consisted of two Catholic priests, including Father Hachem, a nun and two lay psychologists.

The setting, at the Chaldean Catholic Patriarchal Seminary of St. Peter in Irbil, was “like an oasis” of peace, said Father Hachem, who serves as director of the council of churches’ theological and ecumenical department.

Sessions centered around different Scriptural themes, beginning with Jesus’ inquiry before the high priest Annas, in which Jesus asked, “Why do you strike me?” (In 18:23) This opening focus, Father Hachem explained, was to help the participants express the injustice they felt because of their persecution.

“The world has forsaken me” (Mt 27:46) from the Gospel of St. Matthew was the second theme, focusing on how the participants felt abandoned during the traumatic upheaval they experienced. That was followed by “Father forgive them, they do not know what they do” (Lk 23:34), to St. Luke’s Gospel, to promote reconciliation and forgiveness in the hearts of the participants.

The program concluded with, “I am the resurrection and the life” to help participants “stand up again,” Father Hachem explained.

The aim was not only to heal the participants, but to equip them with the tools needed to also address the wounds of the faithful, as well as to build an ecumenical network among Iraqi pastors.

Individual spiritual counseling and group therapy and individual counseling with the psychologists complemented the sessions.

Psychologist Samar Sayhoun said that, “after listening to the participants’ stories of suffering, she was inspired by their faith and attachment to their Church. In relaying what they had experienced, some participants spoke of the sounds of bombs, of seeing spattered blood and beheaded corpses, of losing family members.

“I was so touched by their strong faith, despite everything they went through. They rely on their community in the Church to be able to support each other, at least emotionally, spiritually. But of course, it’s not easy for them,” said Sayhoun, a Maronite Catholic.

Some expressed their grief at leaving all their life behind when they were uprooted in a single night by Islamic State militants.

“They don’t even have one photograph from their past,” Sayhoun said.

Sayhoun said she was especially moved by a 31-year-old lay participant who brought “so much joy” to the sessions, despite her ordeal of fleeing Mosul with her family because of terrorist threats, then being driven out of the Nineveh Plain by the Islamic State in the summer of 2014.

“She loves to sing and dance, smile and laugh,” the psychologist recounted.

That’s why it was important for the past to “talk about the past, about having a new life, after such a dramatic trauma, Sayhoun said. ‘This is the resolution of my story’

Some religious shared how “so many Muslims are coming to them to hear about Christ and are converting to Christianity, of course without announcing it to their [Muslim] community,” Sayhoun noted.

Sayhoun stressed that Iraqi Christians need more healing opportunities.

“They are so happy that people came to listen to them,” she said, adding that they need interaction with people from outside, from abroad.

“Just to regain their dignity. Just to be respected, being heard, being appreciated” means a lot to Christians in Iraq, Sayhoun emphasized.

At the conclusion of the program, funded by Protestant churches and organizations in Europe and the United States, Father Hachem received notice of a pledge to fund the program through 2019 and 2020.

That means the council of churches can carry out the trauma healing sessions in Syria, Egypt and “again and again” in Iraq, the priest said.

“For me, it was a sign of hope from the Holy Spirit,” Father Hachem said.
SOUTH BEND, Ind. (CNS)—After a nearly two-year legal battle, an unlicensed abortion facility started booking appointments in a location in South Bend on June 19 and planned to begin offering chemical abortions the week of June 23 amid strong objections from the local community.

The story began in 2017, when the Texas-based Whole Woman’s Health Alliance (WWHA) applied for a license to open a chemical abortion facility. The Indiana Department of Health denied the license in early 2018, citing deficiencies in the application and concerns the business was not reputable because some of its affiliated clinics had incurred serious violations.

WWHA subsequently filed suit in the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of Indiana to challenge the constitutionality of the state’s license requirements and other regulation of abortion services. The alliance also asked for a preliminary injunction to suspend those laws so it could operate unregulated until the court rendered a decision, scheduled for 2020.

Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill filed a motion to dismiss the suit on grounds that the Supreme Court and appellate courts have long upheld the right of states to license abortion providers. The state also asked for a preliminary injunction to stay the opening of the facility until the court case was decided.

However, on May 31, the district court granted WWHA the preliminary injunction to allow it to operate the South Bend facility, which then began booking patients and scheduling abortion procedures.

On June 7, the district court denied that stay request, as well as the attorney general’s motion to file a notice of appeal to prevent that opening, saying: “The district court has declared that something as ordinary and fundamental as state licensing—whichever the state does for everything from nursing homes to day care centers—can be invalidated in the name of the right to abortion. This ruling turns the right to abortion into a platform to attack state licensing laws that the Supreme Court long ago declared to be perfectly valid.”

According to National Right to Life News, a 2017 Texas health department report found numerous health and safety violations at the facility, including serious violations for the for-profit abortion chain that she owns and operates.

Local doctors also have voiced strong objections to a facility that provides chemical abortions because they would be called on to surgically remove dead babies when the abortion medications fail to expel the unborn baby, which happens in 6 to 10 percent of chemical abortions.

In the U.S., the most available and effective abortion regime—RU-486—and misoprostol. In the U.S., the most available and effective abortion regime—RU-486—and misoprostol.

A national pregnancy support center founded in South Bend, the Women’s Care Center, also has opposed the facility and to provide an alternate, pro-life presence nearby. In 2018, a rezoning request that would have allowed the Women’s Care Center to locate a care center near the facility was denied by the South Bend City Council, but vetoed by Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who is running for president.

The center subsequently acquired a commercial site across from the WWHA and plans to open a new center there in July.

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In the U.S., the most available and effective abortion regime—RU-486—and misoprostol. Also, chemical abortions can cause serious complications for the woman, who requires competent diagnosis prior to the abortion and a physical exam afterward.

However, the Indiana Department of Health found that the lines between the two entities were blurred and that Hagstrom Miller has actual control of both businesses. Further, the management company she owns provides services for the nonprofit chain as well as the for-profit chain.

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has a strong defense of life community in South Bend, many of whom are active in the local and state Right to Life organizations and the Apostolate of Divine Mercy, which have vocally and tenaciously fought the opening of the facility.

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Diverse faith community embraces new adoration chapel

By Sean Gallagher

SHELBYVILLE—On a sunny Sunday afternoon in June, the air was filled with songs praising Christ’s presence in the Eucharist as hundreds of Catholics stretching out more than a city block took part in a eucharistic procession in the neighborhood around St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville.

It was a public expression of the faith of so many parishioners—young and old, those whose families have long roots in the parish and those who have come more recently as immigrants from Mexico or other Central or South American countries.

The love of the Eucharist that united them all on June 23 on the feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, also known by its traditional Latin title of Corpus Christi, culminated at the end of the procession in the blessing and inaugurating of the parish’s new Divine Mercy Chapel where the Blessed Sacrament will be adored 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

It is the 14th perpetual adoration chapel for the Church in central and southern Indiana. (See article below.)

Father Michael Keucher, St. Joseph’s pastor, was smiling from ear to ear after the procession and the blessing of the chapel.

“This has been the greatest celebration of the Eucharist that I’ve ever experienced,” said Father Keucher. “To see the faith of the people and not just my dream come true, but the dreams of so many people here come true, is just a miracle. There are so many tears—tears of joy that folks have had. It’s something supernatural.”

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson blesses the Divine Mercy Chapel at St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville on June 23. It is the newest perpetual adoration chapel for the Church in central and southern Indiana. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

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Father Michael Keucher blesses the Blessed Sacrament at the head of a eucharistic procession on June 23 at the Batesville Deanery faith community. The procession ended with the blessing of the Divine Mercy Chapel, the newest perpetual adoration chapel in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

When St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville began a perpetual adoration chapel on June 23, it became the 14th such chapel across the Archdiocese of Indianapolis where the Blessed Sacrament is adored 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Perpetual adoration chapels in central and southern Indiana are located at the following parishes:

• All Saints Parish, St. John the Baptist Campus, 25743 State Road 1, Guildford. Information: 812-576-4302, or www.olallsaints.com.
• St. Barnabas Parish, 8300 Rahke Road, Indianapolis. Information: 317-882-0724, or www.olbarnabas.org.
• St. Louis Parish, 13 St. Louis Place, Batesville. Information: 812-934-3204, or www.olbatesville.org.
• St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Information: 317-926-7359, or www.saintmichaelindy.org.

Perpetual adoration chapels in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Father Michael Keucher, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, leads prayer before the Blessed Sacrament during the temporary altar dedicated to St. Joseph during a June 23 eucharistic procession at the Batesville Deanery faith community.

St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, Indiana, is located in the Batesville Deanery. Its pastor, Father Michael Keucher, has pursued the dream of establishing a perpetual adoration chapel for the parish since 2001.

In the fall of 2013, Father Keucher began plans for a chapel at the parish. He sought and received approval from the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Diocesan Vocations Office.

“Right away, Father Keucher and his parishioners had the desire for a perpetual adoration chapel,” said Father David Allender, director of the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

So last fall, he sought and received permission from Archbishop Thompson to begin plans for a chapel at the parish.

By the spring of this year, the plans were in place enough to have parishioners sign up for hours.

Since the chapel was going to be dedicated to Divine Mercy, Father Keucher chose Divine Mercy Sunday as the day on which to invite parishioners to make a weekly commitment to adoration.

In about a week, nearly all 168 slot hours per week were filled. Some hours have two people signed up for them, others as many as five. At least 80 people are on a list of substitutes to fill in when those who have committed to a specific hour cannot make it.

“Father Keucher has been a member of St. Joseph Parish for some 60 years and was on hand for the procession and chapel blessing.

“This parish is going to have much more life—and it already has a lot of life, definitely,” she said. “Shelby County will be blessed, and we won’t even know how many blessings God is giving all of us.”

Other Catholics from Shelby County will be praying in the chapel, as members of nearby St. Vincent de Paul Parish have also signed up for hours.

Members of St. Joseph and St. Vincent are already working together in other initiatives, including a rapidly growing youth ministry and charitable works through the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Father Keucher thinks the increased activity of Catholics in the broader community of Shelby County is tied to their increase in eucharistic adoration.

“It just sets people on fire,” he said. “When you spend time with Jesus, he’s going to call you to do stuff. He’s going to make you a more convicted and active member of the Church, his body.”

“There’s a huge connection between the contemplative life of a parish and the active life of a parish. The active life of a parish will only last, thrive and grow if there is a strong contemplative life.”

The adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Divine Mercy Chapel at St. Joseph Parish will be a means, Flores said, of bringing Catholics of diverse cultural backgrounds at St. Joseph and in Shelby County together toward the unity that Christ willed for the Church.

“It’s going to unite us even more than we already are,” Flores said. “To see that people have devoted at least one hour of their time each week to be in the chapel with Jesus, and to know that someone is going to be there, even in the early hours of the morning, is just amazing. It’s amazing to know that we have all come together to do that.”

• 2008, the new view of the Divine Mercy Chapel was opened.
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• 2019, the new view of the Divine Mercy Chapel was opened.

A monstrance is being held in the hands of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville during the June 23 procession. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)
Theology of Technology/Brett Robinson

Church is the best place for young people to search for more blockbuster.
It was a fantasy starring a mechanical shark that terrorized a beach full of actors. Today, we are likely to follow the real story of shark attack survivor Paige Winter in Northern Carolina, a 17-year-old girl with Down syndrome, as she speaks to her peers on social media with her fighting spirit and zeal for life. Posts about Paige on Instagram have helped reached “blockbuster” status.
Our pressing task is to remind young people that even if the Internet need not be an empty fantasy full of dreams and desires about being the next Instagram star or gaining a thousand new followers.
That’s a movie mindset, and the movie industry is dying because young people want to be expected to the world and place it in. The Church, not the cinema, has always been the best place to start that search.

Brett Robinson is director of communications and Catholic media studies at the University of Notre Dame. (McGrath Institute for Church Life.)

An unexpected voice, and a painful message
For those who say the Church doesn’t get it——Mr. John Kelly, a retired justice up Mgr. John Kennedy. Mgr. Kennedy has perhaps the most irrevocably wrong views about the Church today. He is head of the Vatican office that investigates allegations of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy.
“I can honestly tell you that when reading cases involving sexual clergers, you never get used to it, and you feel your soul and heart burning,” he said recently. “There are times when I am poring over cases that I want to get up and scream, that I want to pack up my things and leave the office and not come back.”
Mgr. Kennedy made this remarkable admission in a speech to a room full of Catholic communicators and journalists during the 2019 Catholic Media Conference. His speech lasted more than an hour, during which you could not hear the proverbial pin drop. At its end, he received a standing ovation.
I was not so moved by his rhetorical skill, but for his honesty. He spoke frankly about the excruciating purgatory of his work.
One of the worst things of my career is seeing photographs and exchanges of chats or messages that are often presented in the acts of the Church as nothing, but honest, this work has changed me and all who work with me. It has taken away another part of myself. It has overshadowed me with sadness.”
Yet if he is overwhelmed by the complexity of this task, he does not forget that it is the victims of abuse who deserve our compassion.
Walking the heavy burden of these crimes in his head, “this is nothing compared to those who have borne this for years in silence. What of the father, mother or siblings of the child who have to look at that child live and through this?” What can they say? Everyone else has a voice.
Compounding the horror is when the victim is not believed. “Can you imagine what it is like for people who believe by Church authorities?” he asked.
Mgr. Kennedy said that the office he heads is the face of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, is now the largest department in the congregation for the first time since its founding in 1542. Seventeen employees are dealing with a tidal wave of complaints, and he compared his work to that of an emergency room doctor dealing with victim after victim after victim. “The Church’s heart has been broken,” he said recently.
Mgr. Kennedy’s speech is a reminder that those who have been hurt by the grotesque clergy and bishops are not just the victims and their families, though they are the most grievously wronged. They are the priests who have been betrayed by their brothers.
And also all those who are the face of the Church in parishes and chaperges, on diocesan newspapers and in schools. Some of those people have retired since 2002 and 2018 and dozens of scandals in between, and like Mgr. Kennedy, they feel anger and pain.
Mgr. Kennedy ended his talk on a note of hope, that all the media attention given to the scandal will be a positive reform. “Perhaps a smaller but a more fearless and authentic Church,” he said. A Church that is willing to start from the beginning, purified, prepared for a new season.”
Please God that it be so.

Greg Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at greg@catholicnews.org.
The first reading for Mass this weekend is from the third section of Isaiah. The three sections of this book, so favored over the years by pious Jews as well as devout Christians, saw a great sweep of Hebrew history, from before the Babylonian conquest, through the exile of many Jews to Babylon, the imperial capital, and finally to the Jews’ return to their ancestral home.

The reading is a great summons to faith, but the prophet reminded the people of God’s mercy and favor so well demonstrated at other times. St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians provides the next reading. It proclaims Jesus to be the Lord and Savior. Paul insists that he himself is no bearer of salvation. Jesus, the Christ, is the Savior. The Lord is our only hope. (Christ is not a name but a title. It means the select of the Lord.)

Where was God in all this? The prophet majestically and relentlessly reassured the people that if they are faithful, God will sustain them. Needed is not an order to these disciples, but the Lord is calling all people to be faithful. Jesus sends 72 disciples in two’s teams. All people are in God’s love. The summer rain pockmarks the face of the lake but the Lord is calling all people to be faithful. Jesus sends 72 disciples in two’s teams. All people are in God’s love.

But as I listen, God speaks to me, as devout Christians, to teach me, and to give me new strength. The summer rain pockmarks the face of the lake, and I feel the presence of God. Summer rain falls on a flower, and it is a reminder that the Lord is calling all people to be faithful. Jesus sends 72 disciples in two’s teams. All people are in God’s love.

The Church continues to affirm the existence of purgatory. Q: I am a cradle Catholic and have always believed in purgatory. Now I am hearing from some people (including from some priests) who deny its existence. Can you clarify this for me? (Location withheld)

A: The Church does indeed believe in the existence of purgatory. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says this: “All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name purgatory to this final purification of the elect” (#1030-31).

This belief is reflected even in the Old Testament, where we read in the Second Book of Maccabees (12:46) that Judas Maccabeus “made atonement for the dead” that they might be freed from sin, which suggests a Jewish practice of offering prayers and sacrifice to cleanse the souls of the departed. Then, in the Gospel of St. Matthew (Mt 12:32), Jesus says that certain sins “will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come,” an indication that a limited purging of the soul may occur after death.

Personally, I find comfort in the Church’s teaching on purgatory. It is not a final destination; everyone there will wind up in heaven eventually. Nor do we know how our concept of time relates to eternity—the purification that takes place in purgatory could even be instantaneous. We just don’t know. I think that the confusion you speak of regarding the Catholic belief in purgatory may stem in part from the conflation in some people’s minds of purgatory and limbo. In years past, it was the common belief of Catholics (although never defined dogmatically) that children who died without being baptized went to a state of natural happiness called limbo instead of being with God in heaven.

But that was theological speculation, not doctrine; and in 2007, the Church’s International Theological Commission, with the authorization of Pope Benedict XVI, published a document that concluded that “there are theological and liturgical reasons to hold that infants who die without baptism may be saved even if there is not an explicit teaching on this question found in revelation.”

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbus Circle Dr, Albany, New York 12203.)

Anthony Mary Zaccaria

C. 1502 - 1539
Feast - July 5

Trained as a medical doctor in northern Italy, Anthony also was drawn to teaching religion to the poor. He decided to switch vocations and was ordained a priest in 1528. In 1530 he and two Milanese noblemen founded an order of reforming priests, the Clerics Regular of St. Paul, more commonly known as Barnabites, after their first headquarters at the Church of St. Barnabas in Milan. Despite Church opposition, the order won praise for its care of plague victims, and was formally approved by the pope in 1533. Anthony was elected the first provost general but resigned to open a second house in Vicenza. He fell gravely ill while giving a parish mission and died at his mother’s home. He was canonized in 1897.

Anthony Mary Zaccaria, C. 1502 - 1539
Feast - July 5

My Journey to God

The summer rain pockmarks the face of the lake and vanishes in steam from the road that I take. The air’s thick with the scent of dying dust and vanishes in steam from the road that I take.

But as I listen, God speaks to me, as devout Christians, to teach me, and to give me new strength. The summer rain pockmarks the face of the lake, and I feel the presence of God. Summer rain falls on a flower, and it is a reminder that the Lord is calling all people to be faithful. Jesus sends 72 disciples in two’s teams. All people are in God’s love.

The Church continues to affirm the existence of purgatory. Q: I am a cradle Catholic and have always believed in purgatory. Now I am hearing from some people (including from some priests) who deny its existence. Can you clarify this for me? (Location withheld)

A: The Church does indeed believe in the existence of purgatory.
lower court rulings have kept it in place, brought to this country as children, explanation of why the program should end. 

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Great Slotten, David, Jay and Pat 

DACA "an unconstitutional exercise of 

DACA, which he ordered in 2017 when 

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Supreme Court to take up DACA case, 

Great-grandfather of 17. 

DESTHO, Ruth, 89, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, June 17. Father of Dianne Barriere and 

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Morgan. Father of Prena 

June, 20. Husband of Sharon 

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Jr.,
VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Blessing bands of wool that archbishops will wear around their shoulders, Pope Francis said, “It is a sign that the shepherds do not live for themselves but for the sheep.”

“It is a sign that, in order to possess life, we have to lose it,” Pope Francis said during his homily at Mass for the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul on June 29.

The 30 archbishops receiving palliums included: Archbishops Wilton D. Gregory of Washington; Michael J. Byrnes of Agana, Guam; Peter Comensoli of Melbourne, Australia; Peter J. Turkson of St. John’s, Newfoundland; and John Wilson of Peterborough, England. A pallium also was blessed for Archbishop Michael Mulhall of Kingston, Ontario, who reportedly was unable to attend.

The palliums are a woolen band that the heads of archdioceses wear around their shoulders over their Mass vestments. Benedictine nuns at the Monastery of St. Cecilia in Rome use wool from lambs blessed by the pope for the palliums, 21 feast of Sts. Agnes to make the palliums, which are kept by St. Peter’s tomb until the Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica.

The palliums are about 3 inches wide and have a 14-inch strip hanging down the front and the back. The strips are finished with black silk, almost like the hoeses of the sheep the archbishops are symbolically carrying over his shoulders.

“I love the imagery” of the pallium, Archbishop Byrnes told Catholic News Service (CNS). “I think the way it’s shaped suggests carrying the lamb on your shoulders.”

The 60-year-old archbishop was an auxiliary bishop in Detroit until he was sent to Guam amid turmoil surrounding sexual abuse allegations against the previous archbishop and concerns about his administration of the archdiocese. A Vatican court later found former Archbishop Anthony S. Apuron guilty of the sexual abuse of minors.

The pallium, given to archbishops by the pope, also is a sign of their unity with him as they minister to a portion of the Catholic “flock.” St. Archbishop Byrnes said, it is a sign of his obedience to the pope, but also expresses “my obedience, of a sort, to the people of Guam,” and the obligation to respond to and assist them.

The archbishop said that when he received his pallium in April, there were allegations of clerical sexual abuse and now there are more than 200.

While Pope Francis continues to bless the palliums and give them to archbishops as his predecessors did, the pope also decided several years ago that the formal imposition of the woolen bands would be done by apostolic nuncios in the archbishops’ archdioceses.

Archbishop Comensoli said celebrating at both the Vatican and in his archdiocese show two dimensions of the life of the Church: “the church universal and the local.”

The pope exercises his authority “as chief shepherd for the universal Church” by giving the pallium to the archbishop, he said. When the formal imposition takes place in Melbourne on Aug. 1, the first anniversary of Archbishop Comensoli’s installation, it will be a sign that each Catholic there has a particular role in the local community, and his as bishop.

In his homily at the Mass, Pope Francis focused on the figures of Sts. Peter and Paul and how Jesus chose them despite their failings and sins.

Both of them, he said, “made great mistakes: Peter denied the Lord, while Paul persecuted the Church of God.

“We may wonder why the Lord chose not to give us two witnesses of utter integrity, with clear records and impeccable lives,” the pope said. But there is a reason there, he continued.

“The starting point of the Christian life is not our worthiness; in fact, the Lord was able to accomplish little with those who thought they were good and decent,” the pope said. “Whenever we consider ourselves smarter or better than others, that is the beginning of the end.

“The Lord does not work miracles with those who consider themselves righteous, but with those who know themselves needy,” he said. “He is not attracted by our goodness; that is not why he loves us. He loves us just as we are; he is looking for people who are not self-sufficient, but ready to open their hearts to him.”

Siena House Vocations Essay
Teen hopes to ‘set the world ablaze’ through her love for Christ

By Theresa Sherman Special to The Criterion

St. Catherine of Siena once said, “If you are what you should be, then you will set the world ablaze.”

This is a goal all of us want to strive for, but first we must figure out who we are. How do we know who we are supposed to be?

Everyone’s journey starts out differently. I am a cradle Catholic. I grew up surrounded by people on fire for their faith, and I know I am incredibly lucky to have it.

Who knows who I would be right now if my family never planted that mustard seed within me? I still remember little moments from my childhood of my whole family praying the rosary at night, as my younger brothers and sisters and I looked through our basket—yes basket—of prayer cards.

After my family moved to the great state of Indiana, and I had grown a little older, I started going to a summer camp with Beglau Group. Our family was blessed with a talented group of girls who have gone on to become a team leader for this year’s Youth Challenge in high school.

I believe my faith began to thrive after I started high school. I started going to youth group once a week. I was confirmed with St. Thérèse of Lisieux as my confirmation saint, and one of my sisters at my sponsor.

If there is anyone who has helped me grow in my faith the most, it is her. She is an ever-burning flame for the Catholic faith, not needing words to spread it.

It is because of her that I am currently considering giving a year to mission work after high school.

Last summer, I had the privilege of being a summer missionary in Cincinnati with nine other high school girls from around the world. There, I not only gained leadership skills and lifelong friendships, but I also developed a friendship with Christ. I was on fire for him every day, and I can still feel my heart burn for him. I have gone on numerous retreats since and have led a few as well.

These experiences have given me the chance to see many people live out their various vocations. I have seen great examples of marriage and parenthood in my parents, grandparents and oldest sister.

One of my youth ministers went on to discern religious life with the Society of Our Lady of the Trinity. I also got to attend the wedding of one of my youth leaders and saw another go to the seminary. One of the best times I had was also about to join a cloistered Carmelite convent.

My family gave me my faith roots. School has given me knowledge of it. Experiences have given it depth. I may not know what my exact vocation is yet. But I strive to say “yes” to the little things so that whatever God calls me to do, I will have the courage to respond with a “yes.”

(Theresa and her parents, William and Sheryl Sherman, are members of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington. She is a home-schooled student who recently completed the 11th grade and is the 11th-grade division winner in the Indiana State Club’s 2019 John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest.)

Employment

STAFF ACCOUNTANT

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Accountant for the Office of Accounting Services. The Accountant is responsible for assisting the Director of Catholic Charities and Agency Reporting in providing accounting services for several agencies.

The position requires thorough knowledge of accounting, proficiency with information technology, specifically Excel, Word, and general ledger software, analytical and problem-solving skills, a willingness to work well with others in a variety of settings, the ability to perform detailed work with accuracy and meet required deadlines, and the ability to maintain confidential information.

A bachelor’s degree in Business Administration with a major in Accounting or a related field is required, in addition to at least 2 years of accounting experience.

To apply, please e-mail a cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to:

Ed Isaksen
Director, Human Resources • Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St. • Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: isaksen@archindy.org

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER
Blessed John Henry
Pope Francis to canonize Blessed John
1958. Pope Benedict XVI beatified him in
Church of England, he joined the Catholic
was announced on July 1 during an

1980 Kickball Champions
This photo captures the archdiocesan Catholic Youth Organization’s 1980 Cadet “A” Girls Kickball League Champion team from St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. The coaches were Dick and Diane Music.

(Would you like to comment on or share information about this photo? Contact archdiocesan archivist Julie Moryla at 800-382-9836, ext. 1538; 317-236-1538; or by e-mail at jmoryka@archindy.org.)

From the Archives

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis will declare Blessed John Henry Newman, the 19th-century British cardinal, a saint on Oct. 13.

The British theologian will be canonized during a Mass at the Vatican along with a Swiss laywoman, an Italian nun, a Spanish nun and a nun known as the “Mother Teresa of Brazil.”

The date for the canonization Mass was announced on July 1 during an “ordinary public consistancy,” a meeting of the pope, cardinals and promoters of sainthood causes that formally ends the sainthood process.

Born in London in 1801, John Henry Newman was ordained an Anglican priest in 1825. He later founded the Oxford Movement, which emphasized the Catholic roots of Anglicanism.

After a series of clashes with Anglican bishops made him a virtual outcast from the Church of England, he joined the Catholic Church at the age of 44 and was ordained a Catholic priest in 1846. Pope Leo XIII made him a cardinal in 1879 while respecting his wishes not to be ordained a bishop.

A theologian and poet, he died in 1890, and his sainthood cause was opened in 1958. Pope Benedict XVI beatified him in Birmingham, England, in 2010.

1980 Kickball Champions

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Parishes can literally laugh their way to the bank, raising up to $4,500 in one night of comedy with the “Catholic Laughs” organization.

“Catholic Laughs” is a national traveling comedy show, featuring clean comedy with comics from major late-night shows. Co-founders Carl Kozlowski and Scott Vinci then spend the evening cracking jokes along with their guest.

The duo charges either an in-advance, negotiable fee to the parish, which the parish usually at least doubles in ticket sales, or they split ticket sales at the door.

It all began when Kozlowski stayed home sick in the third grade. Without his parents to monitor the remote, young Kozlowski was free to roam the channels, and, being a young hell-raiser, Kozlowski was naturally attracted to “The David Letterman Show.”

“His morning show was so nuts I didn’t believe what I was watching,” Kozlowski told Catholic News Service (CNS) in a phone interview from Los Angeles.

“I have always been a bit of a doer in innocent ways, and I figured out I could get away with being sick about every three weeks so that I could watch that show. Thus, a love ignited.

For Kozlowski’s new business partner, Vinci, comedy slowly simmered into his life before he could remember being conscious of it.

“I remember one year, I dressed up as Santa Claus for Halloween,” Vinci said. “I don’t think anyone else knew who I was or what I was doing, but I just thought it was funny because he was funny. I probably 5 or 6."

Each spent years working in “Didlert jobs,” as Kozlowski dubbed them, along with other jobs, while wading through the sewers at the dead bottom of the comic world, performing night after night before audiences of slightly intoxicated people in semi-better-days joints. Eventually, both Kozlowski and Vinci emerged from the cesspool at the bottom of the entertainment industry as successful, sometimes even lucrative, craftsmen in their trade: comedy.

The two met at an open mic night in Chicago, and worked together for a while before they began “Catholic Laughs’.

“I think it helps build community,” Vinci said, “and it is an easy fundraiser. They don’t have to set up a lot of stuff. They have a parish hall with a light and a mic. They don’t realize how easy it is until we come.”

Vinci and Kozlowski are committed to clean comedy, both in their work with “Catholic Laughs” and in their outside gigs. Kozlowski explained their philosophy on clean comedy through the analogy of a deodorant commercial. An old Secret commercial advertised their product as “strong enough for a man, but made for a woman.”

“We are the same way,” Kozlowski said. “We don’t even dumb down what we are doing. We just make it as funny as we can, but we know how to control our output. We are really creating these shows for adult maturity, but there is never anything you have to be embarrassed about hearing.

Vinci added that, contrary to popular belief, it is not necessarily more difficult for a comedian to keep his act “clean” in the industry. Rather, clean shows cultivate a broader appeal, and usually result in more gigs.

Besides the monetary gain they associate with clean comedy, both Vinci and Kozlowski added that their Catholic upbringing never quite allowed them to depart with clean comedy with a clear conscience.

“Both my parents are gone, but I still have this thing in the back of my mind, what would they want to hear,” Vinci told CNS. “There is a part of me that would love to make them proud, and I have to feel good about it, and I would love to have them in the audience laughing along.”

Kozlowski recounted that, when he was just starting out and most vulnerable to falling into the cuss trap, his parents found creative ways to keep him on track, ensuring that his comedy remained pure.

“My dad told everyone every time I had a show to come see it, partly to encourage me but partly to spy on me. I better not even swear once. It came naturally to me right off the bat,” Kozlowski said.

“I found that it is an advantage. Even though people are sometimes dirty in clubs, every club that I have had a major opportunity with, they’re like, ‘Wow, you don’t swear, and you’re funny,’ and they say they appreciate that because it stands out.

Though they are dedicated to “Catholic Laughs,” both Kozlowski and Vinci continue to try to advance their careers.

Vinci continues to pursue a career as a comedic actor, while Kozlowski is working on a sitcom that chronicles his real-life napealogy problem. He is also touring with the show, called “Dazed and Confused,” will premiere on Netflix. He also hosts a radio show, “Man UP,” in which he and his co-host talk about how men can navigate the crazy changes in the world from a Christian perspective.

1980 Kickball Champions

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Every time a Catholic
The feast, he told visitors in St. Peter’s Square, is

Father Don Waznicki of Los Angeles is pictured with Carl Kozlowski, co-founder of “Catholic Laughs,” in this photo. “Catholic Laughs” is a national traveling comedy show, featuring clean comedy with comics from major late-night shows. (CNS photo/courtesy ‘Catholic Laughs’)

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